Pathway to Services and Supports for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

If you’ve noticed that a child you work with is exhibiting signs of autism or has been diagnosed with autism, there are a variety of services and benefits their family might be able to access. Below, you can see the types of support services different state agencies can connect you with. Support services should be person-centered; each child’s needs will be different, and the services they use should be tailored to best fit their needs.

### Services could include, but are not limited to:
- Assistive technology
- Child care services
- Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) program
- Educational/developmental interventions
- Head Start program
- Hearing and vision screenings
- Home visits
- IEP
- OT, PT, and SLP
- Preschool
- Service coordination and community referrals
- Special education

These services are free to all qualified students.

Visit [HelpMeGrowMN.org](https://HelpMeGrowMN.org), call 1-866-693-GROW (4769), or contact your local school district for an education evaluation.

### A healthcare provider or clinic may help with:
- Developmental screening
- Well-child checkups
- Medical diagnosis, including:
  - Initial history, exam, and labs
  - Referral to psychology, developmental pediatrics, or other specialist for diagnostic assessment
- Care or referral for:
  - Nutrition or digestion
  - Seizures
  - Sleep problems
- Referrals for:
  - Occupational therapy (OT)
  - Physical therapy (PT)
  - Speech and language pathology (SLP)
- Medications

### For more information, visit [mn.gov/autism](https://mn.gov/autism) or contact ASD.DHS@state.mn.us. Call the Disability Hub MN™ at 1-866-333-2466 or visit [disabilityhubmn.org](https://disabilityhubmn.org) to get connected to resources and services.
Symptoms and Diagnosis of Autism

People who have autism spectrum disorder (ASD) may experience a range of characteristics and symptoms. Some people may have noticeable characteristics, others may not. Autism may be diagnosed as early as 18 to 24 months, but can be diagnosed at any age. The earlier treatment and intervention begins, the more effective the outcomes. Here are some of the signs and symptoms.

• Differences in interacting with other people and making or maintaining relationships
• Differences with back-and-forth conversation
• Differences using eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, and body language
• Differences reading social cues.

In very young children, the first symptoms of autism may include:
• Limited demonstration of emotions, eye contact, or gestures like waving or pointing
• No or inconsistent response to name
• Limited interest in sharing or playing with others
• Loss of speech
• Delayed speech and/or no social babbling.

An educational determination of ASD allows for the special education and related services the child needs to be provided through their local school district.

A child with an educational determination of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can access resources through the school, like an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). However, that does not mean they have received a medical diagnosis of ASD.

Contact a medical or mental health provider for a diagnostic assessment, or locate a provider on Minnesotahelp.info

A medical diagnosis of ASD:
• Determines a person’s condition and helps the family decide what services and supports are needed
• Does not automatically mean that a child meets the educational criteria for a special education services
• Is needed to access more services or financial support through Medical Assistance (MA) or Social Security.

Learn more at HelpMeGrowMN.org